Machine Translated by Google

I BELIEVE

or **THE REFUGE OF THE CHRISTIAN IN CURRENT TIMES**

Lord, save us: we perish.
Lord, save us: we perish Matt., VIII, 25

by **MGR GAUME,**
APOSTOLIC PROTONOTARY , DOCTOR IN THEOLOGY.

PARIS, GAUME FRÈRES AND J. DUPREY, EDITORS, Rue Cassette, 4; 1867.

FOREWORD

Two words only on the title of this booklet.

CREDO: almighty word. Compared to the marvels that it works, the creation of heaven and earth seems only a game. With this single word, the first Christians pushed back the pagan world, weary the executioners and conquered the Caesars.

CREDO: word always old and always new, always necessary and always effective. Alone, he can give to the sons the victory which he obtained for the ancestors: Hæc est victoria quæ vincit mundum fides nostra.

CREDO: a word odious to hell, all the efforts of which boil down to banishing it from language and tear it from the hearts of individuals and peoples.

REFUGE: at the foot of the great Saint-Bernard, on the edge of the difficult path that goes up to the famous hospice, is a dwelling of modest appearance, but built of freestone, strongly vaulted and always open: it is called the Refuge. It is there that the traveler overtaken by night or assailed by storm finds an assured asylum.

In vain, the raging winds, sinister precursors of the storm, shake the surrounding forests; in vain thick masses of snow, pushed in opposite directions, darken the horizon; in vain the black bear roams the neighborhood, seeking its prey; in vain the avalanche rushes from the flanks of the glaciers, swift as lightning, heavy as a mountain that crumbles: tranquil under its granite vault, the traveler laughs at the danger.

When the conjured elements have calmed their fury, when the ferocious beasts have returned to their lairs and the sky has become serene again, he resumes, grateful and joyful, his steep road towards the hospitable convent.

More exposed than the traveler in the Alps is the Christian of the nineteenth century. Hurricanes, storms, evil animals, far more formidable avalanches threaten his life, his real life. Every day and almost every hour he needs a REFUGE.

This REFUGE, he finds it in this word: CREDO.

Make him aware of the existence, the necessity, the safety of this refuge, so that in hours of danger he will take cover there, certain of escaping all the attacks of his enemies, whether perfidious or so violent as they are: such is the aim of this booklet.

NOTICE

The publication of the Credo earned its author the precious encouragement of the court of Rome, whose here is the literal translation:

"ILLUSTRATED AND REVERENDISH

MY LORD, "The establishment and propagation of Christianity is a fact which by its evidence excludes all kind of doubt, and which deviates so much from the rules of human prudence that to refuse to recognize the action irresistible and supremely miraculous of divine omnipotence, it is to condemn oneself, as Saint Augustine says, to admit a miracle greater than all miracles.

"The divinity of the Teacher and of the Institution once established, all the sophisms against the credibility of the dogmas, all the false claims against the possibility of accomplishing the precepts, crumble of themselves. Much better, more the objections become pressing, the more the miracle becomes manifest. The reason is that it remains impossible to destroy and deny a fact whose duration, so many times centuries, proves each day with new evidence the reality of the divine action. .

Machine Translated by Google

Also, Our Most Holy Father Pope Pius IX congratulates you on having chosen this means, the most expeditious of all and the best within reach of all intelligences, to bring down all the monstrous systems of error which , from day to day, invade us; to strengthen the faithful and to put to naught all the quibbles of the sophists. His Holiness hopes that the very smallness of the volume will be an attraction which will lead everyone to read it, especially young people, in order to find in it both defensive and offensive weapons.

"Such is the desired fruit that the Holy Father wishes for your work; and as a pledge of divine blessing and as proof of his paternal benevolence, His Holiness imparts to you with the liveliest affection the apostolic blessing".

"To these things that I am responsible for announcing to you, I find myself happy to add the expression of my particular gratitude and my respect, praying to God that He fills you with His favors and His graces.

"I am, most illustrious and most reverend Lord, your most humble and most devoted servant.

ROME, May 8, 1869, FR.
MERCURELLI Secretary of His Holiness for Latin Letters

French and foreign bishops, superiors of major seminaries, distinguished priests, religious, men of the world hastened to express their congratulations to the author on the timeliness of the publication of the Credo.

A few excerpts taken at random will reveal the character of these testimonies: "May the wish of the
Holy Father concerning the rapid and widespread dissemination of your new little treatise: the Credo, be accomplished everywhere, and especially in France, where the recent examples from the School of Medicine and the Normal School let us guess what desolate doctrines are fermenting in the heart of part of the youth!

"Your Creed is the best refutation of RENAN and of all the incredulous past, present and future. We let's read in the refectory. Our fathers are enchanted with it; it should be in every house of education".

"Your little Credo is the surest preservative against impiety that can be offered to young people, to young people and all those frightened by big books".

"I read with as much pleasure as profit your new booklet; it seems to me so useful that I became a propagator of it".

"During Lent, we read a few pages of the Credo every evening. Our good people are delighted."

"Your demonstration of the divinity of Christianity is clear, short, eloquent, irrefutable".

"Nowhere have I seen exposed with so much brilliance the peremptory reasoning of Saint Augustine on the necessity to resort to miracles to explain the establishment of Christianity".

"Anyone who reads this booklet will say without hesitation, if he wants to be sincere: Credo. ".

Chapter I
Reason for this writing

I Numerous as the atoms of the air, fatal as the miasma of pestilential marshes, errors of all kinds circulate in modern Europe. Except in the worst days of ancient paganism, nothing like it was seen.

These errors are now reaching their ultimate formula. Rationalism, Pantheism, Materialism, Atheism, Naturalism, Caesarism, Sensualism, Positivism, Socialism, Solidarism, Spiritism: their name alone is appalling.

II With an activity without example, the word, the arts and the press propagate them. These prodigious means of communication, unknown to centuries prior to ours, seem to have been invented only to serve them as more varied and faster vehicles. Every evening, a thousand chariots of fire leave from Paris, from London, from Vienna, from Berlin, from the large and even from the small capitals, carrying away cargoes of poisoned doctrines, which they deposit in all the places where they pass.

Machine Translated by Google

III The next day, in all their forms: books, newspapers, reviews, plays, pamphlets, pamphlets, songs, engravings, all these products of delirious brains fall on Europe, like clouds of devastating locusts on African soil. A few hours later, they penetrated everywhere. You find them in the salon of the rich and in the porter's lodge; in the cafes, in the cabarets, in the workshops, even in the depths of the countryside, under the ploughman's stubble, distilling their venom in the souls and becoming the Gospel of the peoples.

IV What are the results of this universal and incessant propaganda? The sight of what is happening manifests them in part. What is going on ? The effects of the liquor of fire on the savage, these monstrous errors produce them on the civilized. Outside of Catholicism, modern man no longer knows himself. He knows neither what he is, nor where he comes from, nor where he is going. He knows neither how to orient himself nor how to stand firm in the path of justice and truth; neither command, nor obey, nor love, nor pray, nor suffer, nor die.

V No longer having the strength to affirm anything, denying is his whole science. Today he denies everything: he denies God; he denies Providence; he denies the Bible; he denies Jesus Christ; he denies the Church; he denies the Pope; it denies the soul; he denies the right; he denies authority; it denies ownership; he denies the family; it denies the essential distinction between good and evil; it denies the present; he denies the future; he denies himself.

WE It's in such a shake-up of all belief; in the midst of this confusion of Babel and the terrifying darkness of an increasingly thick night; through this incessant hail of fiery darts; within this deeply corrupt atmosphere; among so many scandalous defections; at a time, finally, when Satan, with unparalleled unity, science and vigor, makes all his rams play against Christianity, and seems to be preparing a new fall for humanity: it is in such an environment that must live the nineteenth-century Christian.

VII To live for the Christian is to preserve his faith, integral, unshakable, active.
How will he accomplish this miracle?
Close your eyes to see nothing, your ears to hear nothing? Impossible.
To refute one by one, word or thought, the innumerable errors which besiege it, and which every day change their guise? Impossible.

VIII This situation, it must be admitted, causes fear and pity. Fear and pity above all, for the younger generations who, unable to compare the present to the past, fall asleep without suspicion on the idea that the world is in its normal state, and that the dangers of today are neither greater nor more numerous than yesterday's perils.
Fear and pity, for the Christian weakly instructed in religious things and completely absorbed in earthly concerns.

Fear and pity for all, because, according to too solid appearances, what we see is only the beginning of pain.

IX What can be done to save those who still want to be saved?
To provide them with a refuge: a secure refuge open to all; a shield that is easy to carry and proof against the enemy's best weapons; an anchor of mercy which keeps their boat motionless, in the middle of the agitated waves, and preserves it from the terrible shipwreck, where so many others perish and will perish.
Unless I am mistaken, is not such a service today the first of alms, the most urgent of necessities?

X What will be this refuge, this shield, this anchor of salvation?
The reasoning ? No.

In a century where sophism is king, reasoning has little or no value. His scalpel in one hand, his extinguisher in the other, the first sophist to come attack you with the most solid arguments. He obscures them, dissects them, distorts them, eludes them and ends up delivering them to the laughingstock of the ignorant or literate crowd.

So what is needed?
Facts ?
Of what nature?
Facts which, on the one hand, offer an impregnable landmark to the Christian assailed by doubt, and which, on the other hand, enclose the champion of error in a circle of iron, from which he can only escape by two issues: FAITH, or MADNESS.

Machine Translated by Google

XI Instead of a large number, we understand that it would be best to have only a few facts. Only one, if could suffice, would be perfection.
Now, this fact exists; and on this single fact rests motionless, like the citadel built on the rock, the CREED of the Christian.

Immense, it fills the world, and imposes itself on the faith of humanity. Luminous as the sun, to be understood it requires neither reasoning, nor study, nor fatigue: it requires only the eyes. Inflexible as an axiom of geometry, it leaves no room for error. Unshakeable like the pyramids of the desert, it is a fortified castle from which the young Christian of fifteen can defy all the attacks of sophistry, whatever the brain that gives birth to her, the lips that express her or the hand that write it down.

Redoubtable like an army arrayed in battle, it has always been, it still is, it will eternally be the nightmare of the unbeliever.

What is this fact? We will tell.

Chapter II

The Big Fact: THE WORLD WORSHIPS A CRUCIFIED JEW

I That's the fact.
Facing this giant of the moral world, there is also, without being able to avoid it, the believer and the unbeliever.

To understand the value of this stunning fact, it must be broken down and studied piece by piece, in itself and in its consequences.

II THE WORLD. And what world? It is the world of lights. It's Europe, America, the intelligent portion of Asia and Africa. It is the eternal homeland of great men and great peoples; the nourishing land of genius, science, literature and the arts. In a word, it is, without a doubt, the most enlightened or even the only enlightened part of the human race, and the least disposed to allow itself to be seduced by imposture, to be dominated by prejudices.

III This world ADORES. What does that mean? that is to say, he believes with unshakeable faith that a crucified Jew is God, the Creator of the worlds, the Moderator of empires, the Eternal, the Almighty, the Supreme Judge of all living and dead.
Consequently, he worships Him sovereignly and worships Him alone. He alone builds temples and offers sacrifices. To Him alone, he raises his prayers and his thanksgiving. In Him alone he places his hopes. From Him alone He expects all good things. For Him alone is his love: love manifested by sacrifices of all kinds, even the most costly to nature.

IV A CRUCIFIED JEW . The object of this universal, dazzling, invariable worship of the elite of the human race is a crucified Jew. What is a Jew? At the time when the adored Jew, Jesus of Nazareth, lived, the Jews were the ridicule of the rest of the world. Baseness, ignorance, superstition, deceit, were synonymous with their name. The proof is in pagan authors: such as Cicero, Horace, Tacitus, Suetonius, Martial.
Far from modifying public opinion in their favour, time has made it more hostile. From being ridiculous, the Jews have become odious. For seventeen centuries, the Jew has been herded into Christian towns as a dangerous and impure being. In France, less than eighty years ago, one read on the railings of certain public promenades: The Jew and the pig do not enter here. In Africa, the Mohammedan Arab can still insult the Jew with impunity, pull him by the beard, hit him, spit in his face.

WILL change this universal antipathy, modern emancipation is impotent. She can make a citizen of the Jew: she will never make him a Frenchman, a German, an Englishman. Before the law, the equal of the other inhabitants, the Jew is not equal in public esteem. This comes to him only in proportion as he ceases to be a Jew. This is so true that even today, to paint a traitor, a deceiver, a loan shark, in a single word, we say: he is a Jew. The Jew himself blushes to call himself a Jew, so much does he feel this debased name. It affects another, that of Israelite.

WE Jesus of Nazareth is not only a Jew, he is a CRUCIFIED Jew. At the time when He suffered it, crucifixion was the most ignominious of all tortures. “Slaves, brigands, assassins, seditious, the torture was the cross. They hung there until they died of hunger, thirst, and pain; after their death, food for dogs and crows.

[1] The execution of servants, robbers, assassins, and rebels was a cross, to which they were fastened, and hung upon it, until they perished by hunger, thirst, and pain, after their death the dogs and crows left their food. And so this execution was more infamous and more bitter among the Romans than anything else. (Lamy, Disser. De Cruce, § 1, p. 573.)

Machine Translated by Google

VII Thus, whoever says a crucified Jew, says all that is vilest among the vilest, most accursed among the accursed, most defamed among the defamed, the very reproach of the populace and the last scum of the nations. .
It follows from there, that by adoring a crucified Jew, the world, and the civilized world, is all together actor and witness of a fact which goes beyond the last limits of the absurd:

A WORM ON THE ALTARS OF HUMAN GENDER.

This is the fact .

Chapter III
History of this fact

' WHEN AND HOW DID THE STRANGE PHENOMENON, WHICH WE HAVE BEFORE EYES, OCCUR ?
This fact goes back eighteen hundred years. A thousand times a day today's world proclaims it. Centuries, years, historical events, treaties of peace or war, civil contracts, commercial transactions, any acts of public or private life: everything about him dates from there. To deny the sun would be no more foolish than to deny this first fact.

Now, eighteen hundred years ago, the whole world, except the Jews, worshiped thousands of divinities. To deny the second fact is no less impossible than to deny the first.

II To dethrone these thousands of gods and to substitute for them, in the worship of the human race, the crucified Jew, it was first necessary to overthrow Judaism and Paganism. In other words: it was a question of declaring war on all peoples and attacking them in what is most sacred in the depths of the human heart, religious feeling.

Among the Jews and among the Pagans, the religious feeling was so much the stronger, as it was confounded with the prejudices most flattering for the national pride. All believed their political institutions were inviolably bound to the preservation of their religion.

III History in hand, the Jews proved that the prosperity and reverses of their nation had always come from its fidelity or its infidelity to JEHOVA.

IV On the faith of the oracles, Rome, mistress of the world, regarded the worship of her gods as the cause of her success and the guarantee of the eternal duration of his empire.
Thus, from such a point of view as one considers it, the company is a web of difficulties, each greater than the other.

Chapter IV
First Difficulty: Destroy Judaism

' The company has two phases: the destruction phase and the reconstruction phase. Abolish the religion of all peoples and substitute another: two aspects under which this immense revolution must be studied.

Relative to the rest of humanity, the Jews were few in number, it is true; but they had for their religion a very lively, well-founded, very interested attachment.

II Very strong attachment. For several centuries they had been radically cured of their inclination to idolatry.
Rather than renounce the law of Moses, they had suffered, from the kings of Syria, pillage, devastation, snubs and all kinds of mistreatment. In defense of their faith, a great number had, under the leadership of Mathathias and his sons, shed their blood on the battlefields; others, like Eleazar and the Maccabees, had generously confessed it before tyrants, and, rather than abjuring it, had allowed themselves to be put to death amidst the most terrible tortures.

III Well-founded attachment. Judaism was the true religion. It had God Himself for author; the patriarchs and the prophets, the glory of the nation, for interpreters; the Jews themselves, as sole trustees. Jerusalem was the holy city par excellence. His temple, the only sanctuary in the world, where the true God received the adorations of men and delivered His oracles. A long series of wonders served as the foundation of this religion. The fidelity of the children of Israel to this law descended from heaven had been the source of innumerable blessings. She had earned them the good graces of the proudest conquerors; it still established their superiority over other peoples.

---

[1] A worm and not a man. Ps. XXI, 7

Machine Translated by Google

IV Very self-interested attachment. The false interpretation given to the prophecies by the Pharisees flattered national pride so much that it had become the basis of all hopes. With fanatical obstinacy the Jews looked for a conquering Messiah, who would deliver them from the odious day of the Gentiles, who would place in their hands the scepter of the universe and revive, with new splendors, the beautiful days of the reign of Solomon.

V Now, they had to be persuaded that the self-righteous interpretation of the prophecies was an error; their expectation of a conquering Messiah, a chimera; their religion, a vain shadow that was about to give way to reality; their title, until then exclusive of people of God, a title which was to be shared by all peoples.
They had to be persuaded that their hereditary hatred and contempt for the Gentiles were two sinful sentiments, to be replaced by a love of brothers, without restriction or reserve. Consequently, they had to pass over the defenses of the law of Moses, which forbade them all religious intercourse with the pagans, and, under pain of eternal damnation, worship with them, of the same worship, in the same temples a a man judged, condemned, tortured, by common accord, by them and by the pagans, as a signal malefactor, and to recognize him as the only God of heaven and earth.

Chapter V
Second difficulty: Destroy Paganism.

' The pagans showed themselves no less attached to their religion than the Jews. To elevate this attachment to its highest degree, to the religious sentiment was joined the interest of the passions. Far from hindering them, paganism flattered all the inclinations dearest to degraded man. The mind was not obliged to bow its pride under the yoke of impenetrable mysteries. No authority compelled him, moreover, to accept as a rule of belief what it pleased him to reject.

II The morality of paganism was no more troublesome than dogma. She left the heart perfectly free of its affections. The disorders for which man feels such an imperious inclination were not only permitted, they were held in honour: they were even awarded rewards. What did I say ? consecrated by the example of the gods, they were in a way obligatory. The excesses of intemperance and lust formed the basis of the mysteries of Bacchus, Cybele and Venus. Engaging in public prostitution was an act of religion.

III The idea of a life to come did not spread bitterness over the pleasures of the present life. For most pagans, death was a return to nothingness. The most skilful admitted the successive transmigration of souls, which all ended by arriving at happiness. In their Tartarus, more or less eternal, only certain monstrous crimes were punished, for which men have a natural horror, and which almost all avoid without effort. The other disorders did not close the entrance to the Champs-Élysées .

IV The cult of paganism was no less attractive than its dogma and morals. To honor the gods one went to superb temples. Priests, magnificently dressed, immolated victims, adorned with pomp. Teenagers of both sexes, dressed in long white robes and crowned with flowers, served as ministers.

The emperors, the consuls, the magistrates, the senators with the marks of their dignity, enhanced by their presence the brilliancy of the ceremonies. The air was filled with sweet perfumes that were burned profusely. The most beautiful voices and the most agreeable instruments formed delightful concerts. The sacrifice was followed by feasts, dances, games, gladiator fights, illuminations, fairy shows. To these religious festivals, Rome devoted nearly half the year .

V Add that all that can authorize a worship supported this religion so convenient. They had sucked her with the milk; it was regarded as the most precious heritage of the ancestors. The people considered that their happiness was attached to it; they made it the foundation of their republics and states. She was so dear to them that they fought for her more ardently than for their own lives.

WE This religion was so old that its origin was lost in the mists of time. It was believed that it began with the world and that the very gods were its authors. All the ages, all the nations testified to him. The greatest orators avenged it for the outrages that they dared to inflict on it, and often the gods made their anger burst out against the profaners, by exemplary punishments.
Army generals, the proudest conquerors, dared not leave for their expeditions without going

' Bullet, Discourse on the Establishment of Christ.

Machine Translated by Google

solemnly invoke the gods, from whose temples they came, on their return, to hang the trophies of their victories.

VII If the gods made their anger felt, they also made their powerful protection felt. The world was covered with temples filled with inscriptions that perpetuated the memory of their benefits and the gratitude of those who had received them. The stories were full of their wonders. Such was the confidence inspired by their oracles that no one dared undertake anything without consulting them.

For more than two thousand years, all that the East and the West knew most distinguished had gone in procession to certain temples, famous for the continual succession of prodigies which were accomplished there every day and where the gods appeared in human form.

The sibylline verses promised Rome that she would keep the scepter of the world, as long as she observed these ancient ceremonies, and this city showed an ardent zeal to support a religion which assured her such great destinies.

This is how heaven and earth, gods and men would work together to strengthen paganism.

Chapter VI
Third Difficulty: Establishing Christianity.

' Destroying Judaism and paganism was only the first and least difficult part of the enterprise. On their ruins to raise Christianity, was the second.

Now, what was Christianity? it was the adoration of a crucified Jew, replacing on all the altars of the world, the eternal Jehovah and the great Jupiter. It was, for the Jew as for the Pagan, the most monstrous sacrilege. It was the complete reversal of reason, and the most striking madness. For the less hostile, Christianity was a new religion, absurd, impossible, decried in advance by the ignominious torture of its author and contemptible by the obscurity of its followers.

II To many, both Jews and Gentiles, Christianity was something even more odious. It was the formidable appearance of the truth, of that accusing truth which man dreads like a scourge, because it condemns his works of darkness, tires him with his pitiless lights and pursues him with his implacable remorse. What must have been the terror, the shudder, the rage of all these corrupt-hearted men, with whom the world was full, when they recognized this absolute Queen, who came to claim her usurped rights ?

III If the man who is called the wisest of philosophers, Socrates, was, it is said, condemned to drink hemlock for having dared to recall a single one of these reforming truths, how will those who come to proclaim them all be welcomed, with a authority that does not allow a reply?

Thus, by an unheard-of coincidence, both the ignorance of the vulgar and the science of the sages, conspired with equal force against the establishment of Christianity.

IV It must be said: their most formidable accomplice was Christianity itself. In its dogma, it was a religion bristling with incredible mysteries. She preached a Jewish god, and a crucified Jew; one God, and three persons in this God; a God-man, born of a virgin; a God who is eaten in the form of a piece of bread, who is drunk under the appearance of a few drops of wine; and a hundred other dogmas equally ridiculous in the eyes of reason. All these dogmas had to be accepted without saying a word and with such conviction that one had to be ready to die to defend them, on pain of falling, at the end of life, into eternal fires.

V In its morals, it was a terrible religion of severity and austerity. Frighteningly severe; it did not merely condemn sinful actions. She forbade words, looks, the slightest gesture opposed to any of the virtues she preached, and she preached them all. Descending to the depths of consciences, she sought out the most delicate fiber and tore it out without pity. In his eyes, the thought of evil, fleeting but consensual, was a crime punishable by an eternity of torture.

WE Scary austerity; she spoke only of crucifixion, of tears, of mortifications, of fasting, of continual vigilance, of combats against oneself, of humiliating confessions and of a hundred other practices more embarrassing, and, in appearance, more absurd than each other. others.

To cite just one example: “We said to a man who asked to be a Christian: If you want to be of our religion, you must undress. Undress me, who? Me ? an honest man, a prince, an emperor, a Constantine, despoil me? Are you kidding me for telling me that? Yes, you need

[1] When you shined wonderfully from the eternal mountains, all the foolish in heart were troubled. Ps. 75

Machine Translated by Google

put on your shirt in the presence of one of your vassals, and beg him to immerse you in water, and not only up to the neck, but up to the top of the head. They baptized thus in the primitive church .
It also ordered the observation of unknown laws, contrary to the most ancient customs, to the most universal prejudices, such as the forgiveness of injuries, the love of enemies, the brotherhood of all men and their equality before God: c that is to say, it attacked at heart the whole ancient world, whose social basis was slavery.

VII In her cult, she inspired no less repulsion. The magnificent churches, the brilliant solemnities, the imposing ceremonies which today captivate the senses and attract the hearts, were unknown to primitive Christianity. It was a poor religion which, instead of pompous feasts, dances, feasts, circus games, shows in the amphitheater, offered only gloomy images, bloody memories, serious readings, instructions and prayers, the object of which had nothing flattering for the senses.

It was a religion entirely spiritual and entirely of the future. As a reward, she promised here below only the contempt of the wise, the hatred of the people, spoliation, death in the most terrible forms; and, after death, invisible goods of which men can form no idea.

VIII That the ancient world had accepted Paganism without resistance and even with eagerness; that he showed himself strongly attached to it, one can imagine. To establish Paganism was to open before the torrent of passions the dykes which hold it back. On the contrary, to establish Christianity was not only to stop the torrent, but also to bring it back to its source. To be attached to Paganism was to worship the most imperious and dearest inclinations. To cling to Christianity was to crucify oneself alive. If the first enterprise offers nothing difficult, the second is a challenge to all human forces.

IX By the same cause are explained the successes of Mahomet. At the head of fanatical armies, the camel driver of Mecca presents himself to the ignorant and corrupt Arab; then, the saber in one hand, the cup of pleasures in the other, said to him: Believe or die.

In the faith that he asks for in life, is the authorization to plunder, to kill, to reduce to slavery all that is not a believer; after death, the guarantee of all sensual pleasures in a paradise of pleasures. It is also conceivable that by flattering the passions, Mohammedanism was able to make itself innumerable partisans. To obtain such a result, one must be neither god, nor wonderworker, nor saint, nor prophet.

X It is thus with all the so-called religions which have appeared in the world. Not a single one which did not owe its origin, its progress and its duration to the emancipation of one of the three concupiscences of the human heart: pride, cupidity, voluptuousness.

Less opposed is light to darkness, than Christianity to all these false religions. Alone he does not come to terms with any weakness; he alone attacks head-on all vices and all corrupt inclinations; he alone preaches all the virtues and orders all kinds of sacrifices.
Such, it must be repeated, is the religion which it was a question of establishing.

Chapter VII
Fourth difficulty: The scope of the company

IA who do we pretend to impose this frightening religion?
To a few isolated, ignorant, half-wild towns?
Non.
To a few small towns in the East or the West, equally foreign to the enlightenment and corruption of the rest of the world?

Non.
To barbarian peoples only, and not to Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, the princes of the civilisation ?
Non.

II It is a question of preaching it to all peoples without exception, to the East and to the West, to the entire universe.
The enterprise will have no other limits than those of the world. The ices of the North, the fires of the South, the immensity of the ocean, the harshness of the mountains, the sands of the deserts, will be powerless barriers to arrest its course. The colossal empire of the Caesars, which believes itself alone to be the whole universe, must only form a part of this church which we wish to establish. The superb Roman, the softened Asiatic, the voluptuous Indian, the stupid Moor, the proud German, the ferocious Scythian, all enter into this project.

[1] Father Lejeune, Sermon on the Establishment of the Faith, t. V, 451

Machine Translated by Google

III The pretended empire of climates, the diversity of races, the antipathy of minds, the jealousy of glory, the rivalry of domination, the opposition of interests, the difference of mores, the characteristic vices of nations, must not prevent all peoples to unite in one and the same society; to adopt the same faith, to practice the same worship, to practice the same virtues and to regard each other as brothers .

Chapter VIII
Fifth difficulty: Time

What time do we choose to preach this inconceivable madness and impose this religion, no less severe in its morals than absolute in its dogma?

Undoubtedly one of those fabulous centuries, of which the poets speak, where men scattered in the forests, without education, without light, without defense, were disposed to believe all the daydreams announced by skilful impostors, golden centuries , where, without passions as without vices, the inhabitants of the earth found in them no obstacle to accepting the yoke of morality, however heavy it was?

Non.

We choose the century of Augustus: a perfectly historical century.

II What was the age of Augustus? The most enlightened and corrupt pagan century; the century of the most advanced material civilization; the century of orators, poets, philosophers, warriors, men so great in all genres that a fanatical admiration continues to give them to youth as masters and models; but also men whose debauches today seem fabulous, and whom the mere idea of duty or constraint was enough to infuriate.

III To practice theft, usury, extortion, infamous vice in all forms and with unheard-of refinements, was their study, their life, their triumph. To have thousands of men devoured by armies of tigers, lions, and panthers, or to have them slaughtered among themselves, was their pleasure.

This pleasure was so habitual that the sun did not rise once without illuminating it on some point of the globe; so intoxicating that mountains of gold were sacrificed to it, and that one was sure, by promising it to the people, of attaining, were one the least of the wretched, the first dignities of the empire.

IV To change lions into lambs, or pieces of granite into children of Abraham, is no more difficult, everyone will agree, than to make such men accept, in such a century, the dogma and morality of Christianity. .

Chapter IX
Sixth difficulty: The slanderers.

No sooner had Christianity appeared than thousands of slanderous voices were raised against it, following it, accompanying it, preceding it in all its steps, ruining its first conquests and rendering impossible those which it meditated. Divided on all the rest, the Jews and the Pagans had joined together to form this formidable concert, which resounded with all the echoes of the East and the West.

II Men of nothingness, renegades, blasphemers, seditious, destroyers of the true religion, enemies of the people of God, disturbers of public rest, profaners of Scripture; fanatics who carried their audacious sacrilege so far as to substitute for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, an insignificant malefactor, legally condemned and put to death for his crimes by the hand of the executioner: such was, with many other insults, the definition that the Jews gave of Christians.

III The Christians, said the Pagans in their turn, are atheists whose impiety provokes the wrath of the immortal gods; tenebrous magicians who, the better to succeed in their criminal designs, do not want among them either scholars, or virtuous men, or nobles, or rich; but only fools, dupes, poor people, children, wenches, slaves, scoundrels, like those who invented this abominable superstition, and whose leader, delivered to Pilate by his own nation, justly suffered the torture. infamous of the cross; monsters with human faces, who in their nocturnal feasts cut the throat of a child whose blood they drink, and eat with delight the quivering flesh, after which they plunge into the most infamous debauchery.

IV These calumnies and a thousand others had prevailed so much that the name of Chretien had become that of all crimes, so that it sufficed to bear it to be, without any examination, judged worthy of all crimes.

[1] Bullet, Discourse on the Establishment of Christ.

Machine Translated by Google

torture and hatred of the human race. Accused of this crime, which included them all, Nero had an enormous multitude of them burned alive, multitudo ingens. When they were led to their death, a herald preceded them crying: He is a Christian, an enemy of emperors and gods, Christianus, inimicus Deorum et Imperatorum. And that was enough to extinguish any feeling of pity for them.

Chapter X
Seventh difficulty: The heretics.

Pursued by universal hatred, Christianity had no resource except in the close union of its members. Suddenly an obstacle, the most unfortunate perhaps, is formed in the very bosom of the new religion.

II There is a division among the Christians: heretics appear. A few paces from the cenacle, from which Christianity had just emerged, they raise altar to altar. Even during the lifetime of the apostles, they altered the doctrine of the Master, whose divinity they went so far as to deny. By their revolt, they weaken the authority of the pastors in the minds of the neophytes. By their stories full of falsehoods, they undermine the authenticity of the Gospels. By their morals, even more than by their speeches, they preach monstrous errors, which give rise to abominable sects.

III These sects abound like tares. In less than a century, more than eighty emerged. In Asia, in Europe, in Africa, we meet them everywhere. The new religion cannot take a step without them following in its footsteps to discredit it. The scholars, the men of the people, the women above all, and even deacons and priests, are the authors of it, or become the most ardent propagators of it.
Taking advantage of this division, the Jews and the Pagans repeat, together, that the Christians do not deserve any confidence, since they agree so badly among themselves.
In fact, what way to rely on preachers some of whom said yes and others no?
Indifference and contempt were all they could be granted.

Chapter XI
Eighth difficulty: The philosophers.

Following the heretics come the philosophers, Jews and pagans. Never were they so numerous nor so hostile to the truth. Lending an attentive ear, they collect all the rumors which run on the account of the Christians. They inquire curiously about what is going on in the new religion; and, purposely confusing the true faithful with heretics, they impute to Christianity errors which it condemns and abominations which it condemns. Even the Scriptures and the apologies do not escape their research.

II Fully armed, they set out to prove, in public writings, that all the rumors are founded; that Christians are really atheists, equally enemies of gods and emperors, in a word, scoundrels such as fame presents them; that their doctrines are a jumble of daydreams, contradictions and impieties. Quotations, sarcasm, reasoning, erudition, eloquence, even genius, nothing is lacking in their works.

III No objection is forgotten, so much so that from the fourth century onwards the most skilful enemies of religion have been unable to find a new one. The case is judged. The people, always accustomed to believing on the word of the wise, strengthened themselves unshakeably in their opinion of the Christians. This opinion he sums up with the word bloodthirsty, which resounded for several centuries in the four corners of the world: The Christians with the lion, Christianos ad leonem.

Chapter XII
Ninth difficulty: The scoffers.

While slanderers devote Christianity to universal execration, while heretics tear its bosom, and philosophers ruin it in the minds of scholars, scoffers seize it and deliver it up to the derision of the people.

II If we want to get an idea, at least imperfect, of the effect that must have produced on the working classes of Rome or Athens, the comic comedies, the ignoble caricatures, the more or less crude jokes by which Christianity disguised was fed to ignorant and depraved crowds, it is enough to remember what we have seen, what we still see.

Machine Translated by Google

III When we wanted to popularize the hatred and contempt of the Holy Father, of the gentle and august Pius IX, we played him on the stage. During one hundred and six consecutive performances, a too famous comedy represented him as a tyrant who, trampling underfoot the sacred rights of paternal authority, deserves the blame of some, the hatred of others, the contempt of all. A hundred times the deceived spectators have shown their hostile dispositions by energetic reprobations and tears of compassion on the pretended victims of papal despotism.

IV In the same way, to stifle in the masses the salutary fear of eternal punishments, nothing has been found better than to profane and ridicule them in the comedy, so popular for a long time: The Beauty of the Devil.

V Needless to add that comedies are joined by pamphlets and caricatures. Such is, in the eyes of the enemies of religion, the unmistakable effect of such weapons, that they contrive to invent new ones every day, certain of provoking, if not always hatred, at least estrangement, contempt. and disbelief.

VI None of these attacks are wanting to nascent Christianity. Libelles, written in the spirit of Voltaire, caricature the new religion. The joke runs from mouth to mouth and spares neither men nor things, nor the virtues of Christianity. Some of these libels become obligatory on the schools, and the rising generations are brought up in the deepest contempt of Christians.
The arts join in. The disciples of the Crucified are represented, even on the walls of the imperial palace, kneeling before a man with the head of an ass, nailed to a cross.

VII To finish ridiculing the new religion, the actors put it on show and translate it into scenes, each one more burlesque than the other. Its most august ceremonies, its most sacred mysteries, its most respectable laws, enacted by entertainers, in the very presence of the emperors, remain struck with a ridiculousness which drives them away more than the iron of the executioners. The means, I ask, of adoring the next day what one had received the day before, with laughter and contempt?

Chapter XIII
Tenth difficulty: The progress of Christianity

I Even the progress of Christianity becomes obstacles to its propagation and a perpetual threat to its existence. Among those who listen to the Galileans, some, docile to grace, embrace the truth; others persist in error.

II The children become Christians, the parents remain pagans. Baptized slaves refuse to serve as playthings for the abominable whims of their masters; buyers of idols, victims and perfumes no longer appear at the dealers whose fortunes they made.

III Families are divided; blood ties are unknown. The brother denounces his brother; the father, his son; the husband, his wife; the master, his slave; the friend, his friend. Social relationships are altered or broken. Little by little the towns and the villages form two camps armed against each other. These intestine dissensions resound outside. Brought before the courts, they impassion the public in the opposite direction and provoke explosions of hatred and curses against their doctrines.

Chapter XIV
Eleventh Difficulty: Persecutions

I Like the waves of the sea on a stormy day, rise to the top of the rocks that border the shore; thus this mass of calumnies, accusations, quarrels and particular divisions rises to the imperial throne, on which are seated Nero, Domitian, Decius, Diocletian.

II For them, it is now a given. Christianity is an element of discord, an evil sect; the Christians disturbers who compromise the public tranquility and the prosperity of the empire; impious who provoke the wrath of the gods, whose worship is the guarantee of the eternal domination of Rome. If the barbarians threaten the borders, if the imperial legions suffer a defeat, if the Tiber overflows, if the sky refuses its rains, if the earth trembles, if the famine is felt, if the plague comes: the Christians are responsible for it.

III Then are ordered those famous persecutions, those mass massacres that everyone knows about and which were to smother the new religion a thousand times over in the blood of its disciples. In a while

Machine Translated by Google

where men's lives were a game, where the most atrocious torments were the most sought after by the spectators, neither rank, nor age, nor sex were spared. Ordinary punishments seem too mild for those who are regarded as the enemies of the gods and the state. We invent, or we renew tortures that make people shudder.

IV Christians are beaten with rods, applied to tortures, flayed with brazen nails. They are torn with iron, they are consumed by fire; they are nailed to crosses. We make a barbaric game of seeing them torn to pieces by dogs, devoured by lions. They are covered with fiery blades, seated on burning chairs, immersed in boiling oil, burned over low heat. They are broken under millstones, cut into pieces. They are buried alive. In their bodies covered with wounds, only wounds are torn. The moments they have left to live are treated with cruelty. One chooses among the tortures those which make them die more slowly. They are cured by barbaric treatments, to put them in a condition to suffer again.

V Pity is extinguished for them in the hearts of men. They applauded their tortures with cries of joy. Even death does not shelter them from their persecutors. We go after the sad remains of their bodies. They are reduced to ashes, they are thrown into the rivers, they are thrown into the wind to annihilate them, if possible. Rome is intoxicated with their blood, she makes rivers flow from it, and the hatred that is felt for them is not satisfied.

VI Like a vast conflagration, the persecution once ignited in the capital is communicated step by step. It extends to the extremities of the empire, then almost as extensive as the world. It is not a persecution of a few days, it is by centuries that we must count the time of the sufferings of the new religion. One can only follow it, for three hundred years, except by the trace of the blood which it sheds and by the light of the stakes which are lit against it.

VII To the persecution of blood we add that of caresses, we strive to seduce those we have not been able to conquer. Wealth, honours, dignities, pleasures, favors from the prince, everything is promised to win men deaf to pain, against whom torments are dulled and for whom death has no sting. This is how everything is done to annihilate the Christian name[1] .

VIII Put before your eyes the difficulties which we have just indicated; then, giving free flight to your imagination, say if you know of a more gigantic attempt, a more impossible enterprise than the establishment of Christianity?

Chapter XV
Weakness of means.

The revolution which it is a question of effecting is, without a doubt, the most difficult one can conceive. However, the means can be so powerful, the measures so well proportioned to the effect, that imperceptibly one comes to the end of undertakings which appear to be the most impossible. We therefore expect, and common sense requires it, to see appearing beings as extraordinary as the mission entrusted to them.

II As humanity does not offer any who are at such a level, it will doubtless be the angelic nature which will provide the heroes of this astonishing conquest?

Non.

Who ?

Humanity.

At least we will choose in humanity all that it possesses that is most distinguished by the superiority of talent, by the nobility of origin, by the brilliance of dignities, by the greatness of fortune, by the extent of power, the Caesars, masters of the world?

Non.

At least Greeks famous for their wisdom and their eloquence; Romans whose very name makes kings tremble on their thrones?

Non.

Who ?

Barbarians.

But at least illustrious Barbarians: Egyptians, fathers of science; Gauls or Parthians, formidable in Rome itself?

[1] Bullet, Discourse on the Establishment of Christ.

Machine Translated by Google

No, something less.

III Who ?
Of the Jews, people despised by all peoples.
But at least the heads of the nation, the high priests, the rich, the scholars?
Non.
Who ?
Men of the lowest people, fishermen by profession.

IV But under a coarse bark, they undoubtedly hide the most beautiful gifts of genius, they are very eloquent?
They don't even know their language.
Very learned?
They only know their obscure profession.
Very rich?
Their entire fortune is their boats and their nets.
Very virtuous?
One is guilty of perjury, the others of jealousy and ambition. All pass for infamous men of bad life.

So they are heroes through courage?
The bravest tremble like a leaf at the voice of a servant.
At least numbers can make up for courage, there will be thousands of them!
They are twelve, neither more nor less.

V Yes, twelve fishermen, twelve Jews, that is to say literally the last men of the last of the nations; or, according to the apt expression of one of them, the sweeping of the world: such are, by the unanimous testimony of Jews, Gentiles, believers and unbelievers, the heroes of the most colossal enterprise that ever was.

WE These are the ones who must present themselves in the most polite courts, speak before the most illustrious academies, be the doctors of kings and peoples, convince the sages of madness, the philosophers of ignorance, the whole world of crime and error.
By applying all your genius to it, try to find a company which presents as much disproportion between the means and the end which one wishes to attain.
A troop of twelve boatmen to convert the universe!
What derision!

Chapter XVI
magnitude of success

What will be the outcome of the business? Such a question is settled in advance. What success, I ask, can we promise ourselves for men who, having all opposition to overcome, only employ obstacles as means?

II We see, on the one hand, two religions, mistress of the world, Judaism and Paganism. One true, but transitory, is in possession of the energetic attachment of its followers, spread over all the countries of the earth.

The other is false; but it is an agreeable and pompous religion believed to have been established by the gods; which is considered as old as the world; which is regarded as the basis of public prosperity.
On the other hand, is a severe, simple, new religion, hostile to national customs and the established order.
On the one hand, sages, philosophers, men of genius, magistrates, emperors, armies, the whole universe; on the other, a few ignorant, defenceless, without support, without help.
On the one hand, authority, cruelty, fury; on the other, weakness, patience, death.
On the one hand, the executioners; on the other, the victims1 .

III To whom remained the victory?
To the universe, says reason.
To the twelve fishermen, history answers.

---

1 Bullet, Disc. on the establishment of Christ.

Machine Translated by Google

Yes ; and profane history, written by the Jews and by the Gentiles themselves, eyewitnesses to the event, and mortal enemies of the Christians. This story teaches that the success of the Galilean fishermen was rapid, serious, real, lasting.

Chapter XVII
Quick success

I On the very day that the strange preachers appear in public, three thousand Jews fall at their feet and embrace their doctrine. The next day, five thousand others imitate them. With the rapidity of lightning which furrows the cloud, with the activity of fire which consumes a field of dry reeds, Christianity gains Samaria, Syria, Asia Minor. Smyrna, Ephesus, Corinth, Athens open their doors to him. Arabia, the Great Indies, Persia, Armenia, Ethiopia, Libya, Egypt provided him with innumerable disciples.

II From the East he passes to the West, and in a few years Rome, the abode of Nero, the citadel of idolatry, finds itself peopled with an immense multitude of Christians, multitudo ingens. The Gauls, the Spains, Great Britain, Germania number them by the thousands.

III So had announced Jesus of Nazareth. My doctrine, he said one day to his disciples, will go around the world before the ruin of Jerusalem, that is to say in less than thirty years .
The events precede the end of the prophecy. In ten years, the Crucified has worshipers in all parts of the universe2 . Forty years later, according to the testimony of the persecutors themselves, the Christian sect has swarmed in all the provinces of the empire .

IV Soon a lawyer of Christianity, Tertullian, will say, without fear of being contradicted, before the Roman magistrates: "We are only yesterday, and already we fill everything, your cities, your islands, your fortresses, your colonies, your villages, your assemblies, your camps, your tribes, your stables, the palace of the emperor, the senate, the forum: we leave you only your temples...

“We could even, without openly revolting, cause you to experience an ignominious defeat: it would be enough to separate us from you. If this immense multitude were only to leave you, to retire to some distant country, the loss of so many citizens of all conditions would decry your government and have punished you enough. Horrified by your loneliness, by the silence of business and the amazement of the whole world, as if stricken with death, you would have thought in vain to seek whom to command: you would have been left with more enemies than citizens.

V Thus, while Rome, always in arms, needed seven hundred years of victories to form her empire, disarmed Christianity reigns, from its origin, over all nations, and the cross of Jesus Christ is displayed on shores, where the eagle of the Caesars never appeared. Less than three centuries after leaving the cenacle, the new religion subjugated Rome itself; and quietly seated on the imperial throne, she holds the scepter of the world.

Chapter XVIII
serious success

I This eagerness for Christianity is not a speculation capable of enriching, nor a matter of fashion which flatters vanity, nor a momentary enthusiasm which betrays more lightness than reflection, nor an indifferent determination which does not commit to anything.

II To become a Christian is to dedicate oneself to the spoliation of one's goods and to poverty; it is to condemn oneself to insults, to contempt, to the hatred of one's relatives, to the fury of the people, to the anger of the emperors, to exile, to persecution; in a word, it is to sign his death warrant. And what a death, great God! Death in the midst of the most terrible tortures, death in the midst of the clapping of the hands of all the spectators.

III Well! this death warrant is signed, not by a few fanatics, dying to support an opinion; but by witnesses who affirm sensible facts, seen with their eyes and touched with their hands. It is signed, not in a corner of the world; not within a few months or a few years. It is signed, solicited even with ardor, accepted at least with thanksgiving, by innumerable multitudes

---

1 S.Matth. XXIV, 4.
2 See the date of the Epistle to the Romans.
3 See the Edicts of Persecution and Pliny's letter to Trajan.
4 Apol., c, XL.

Machine Translated by Google

men, women, children, young virgins, old men, senators, consuls, army generals, scholars, philosophers, rich and poor, in all the countries illuminated by the sun: and that for three centuries!

IV In vain the edicts of proscription multiply and fall on Christians, like hail on a stormy day; in vain legions of proconsuls, dragging after them armies of executioners and the formidable apparatus of all kinds of tortures, traverse the provinces to spread terror; in vain, the scaffolds are erected on all sides; in vain the stakes are kindled at all points of the empire; in vain the ferocious beasts which nourish the forests of Germany, or which conceal the deserts of Africa, are brought by the thousands into the amphitheatres and into the circuses, to devour the Christians: the fire of persecution only increases the ardor of martyrdom.

V From the height of their throne, the masters of the world order the worship of the gods, and they are despised. From the top of his cross, Jesus commands us to come to Him, and we run there through the gibbets and the stakes. The whole of Olympus trembles on its altars. The magistrates turn pale in the midst of their fasces. The executioners themselves grow weary; the blunt ax slips from their hands, and, Christians in their turn, they mingle their blood with the blood of their victims.

If you read the bulletins of this gigantic combat, you will find, according to the most conscientious calculations, eleven millions of martyrs, during the first three centuries. Of this number, Rome alone has more than two million.

Chapter XIX
real success

Christianity does not only act on the surface, it penetrates the depths of humanity. Under his action, the most softened hearts are tempered again; the most rooted vices give way to solid virtues. Humility dethrones pride; gentleness and forgiveness of injuries, revenge and cruelty; and in this world, where, only the day before, Augustus had not been able to find seven Vestal Virgins, germinates a people of Virgins.

II Ideas undergo an analogous change. To gross errors, to eternal gropings about God and Providence; on man, his nature and his destinies; on the world, its origin and the goal of its existence, succeed knowledge so complete and so precise, that they make even today all the superiority of the Christian nations on the pagan world. Pushing its salutary influence further, the new Religion modifies all the laws of the human race, in the religious, political, civil and domestic order.

III In the religious order. From one pole to the other, the innumerable divinities who drank the blood of men and who honored themselves with their crimes, are thrown down from their altars. The unity of God shines on the world, like the rising sun on nature. With its pure and lively light, this dogma enlightens, embellishes, vivifies humanity.

IV In the political order. Thanks to the doctrine of Jesus of Nazareth, peoples cease to see enemies in foreigners. The savage maxim: woe to the vanquished, vae victis, is erased from military ensigns and forgotten by the victors. To the law of hatred, the ancient basis of pagan societies, succeeds the law of charity, which makes all men members of the same family.

V In the civil order. Abolished de jure by the promulgation of Christianity, slavery is abolished in fact, as soon as circumstances permit. In the meantime, the slave is no longer regarded as a thing, which it is permitted to use and abuse; as a being of an inferior nature, who is outraged without pity; that one crucifies for a quail escaped from its cage, or that one makes devour by the moray eels, for a broken plate.

It is not even the poor, object of universal hatred and contempt, who does not become a cherished being, a sacred being for whom palaces are built, and to whom the rich give their gold to feed them, their sons to to protect him, his daughters to look after him, himself, finally, to serve him.

VI In the domestic order. Called back to his original dignity, what am I saying? to a higher dignity, marriage is sanctified in the very act which constitutes it, as in all the duties which it imposes. The two cankers of pagan societies, polygamy and divorce, authorized by all ancient legislation, become a double crime. Rebuilt on the basis of unity and indissolubility, the family regains its vigor and nobility. The father ceases to be a despot, the wife a slave, the child a victim.

Machine Translated by Google

Chapter XX
Lasting success

I When you look around the face of the world, what do you see? Ruins and more ruins: material ruins and moral ruins. Everywhere man betrays himself in the fragility of his works.
Babylon has fallen. Carthage, Thebes, Sparta are no more. Of Athens, of Corinth, only debris remains. Rome herself, that superb queen of the nations, to whom her gods had promised eternity, Rome who thought she had annihilated even the Christian name, sleeps buried with her gods and her Caesars, under the mutilated ruins of her palaces and its temples.

II What has become of the institutions of the most famous peoples, the systems of the most renowned philosophers, the codes of the wisest legislators? Where are the intelligences that feed on it, the societies that live on it? Unknown to the vulgar, without authority, without application, simple object of curiosity for the scholar, these masterpieces of genius figure among human knowledge, much like the Egyptian mummies in a museum of antiquities.

Everything has changed, everything has disappeared, everything is dead. Institutions, systems, laws, empires, twenty times over eighteen centuries, have crumbled to make way for other institutions, other systems, other laws, other empires, which in turn are erased by no less fragile creations.

III Will it be the same with the edifice erected by the Galilean fishermen? Eighteen centuries of duration answer you: their work is exempt from the caducity of human things. The revolution they bring about is not a passing change, which one century has seen accomplished and the following century sees disappear. Unlike all other events recorded in history, the passage of the world to Christianity is an ever-subsisting fact. Outside, everything is vicissitude, fragility, ruin.

IV The only immutable society founded by the Jew has lost neither a single one of its dogmas nor a single one of its laws.
Even today, the civilized world still lives by His doctrines. As young as when she left the cradle, as strong as in the days of her adolescence, she equally defies the barbarism of peoples, the despotism of kings, the storms of rebellious passions, the ax of executioners, the sophisms of impiety, the scandals of his own children, and remains standing among the scattered debris of all human creations.

Do you know of a success that can be less explained, by the teachings of history or by the data of science?

Chapter XXI
A guess

I We have just read, in all its simplicity, the fact of the establishment of Christianity, related by common agreement by the Jews, by the Gentiles, by the Christians, all eyewitnesses. We don't judge it, we see it. Only, in order to show what is striking about it, it remains to summarize it in the following supposition.

II Let's transport ourselves in thought, when Christianity appeared on earth, and suppose with St. John Chrysostom, that a pagan philosopher meets the Son of Mary, beginning to preach His doctrine.
Jesus is alone, He walks on foot, a stick in his hand, dressed like a worker.
Where are you going ? asks the philosopher.
I will preach My doctrine.
What do You claim by preaching through the villages of Judea, what You call Your doctrine?
Convert the world.
Make the universe abandon its gods, its religion, its mores, its customs, its laws, to make it adopt Your maxims: You are therefore wiser than Socrates, more eloquent than Plato, who could never impose his laws on a only town in Attica?

I do not consider myself a sage.

III Who are you then?
I am known for the son of a poor carpenter in Nazareth.
By what secret means, then, have You prepared the success of Your enterprise?
Hitherto I have spent My life in My father's shop, working with him to earn My daily bread. Recently, I travel the country. Some disciples followed Me; it is to them that I will entrust the task of establishing My doctrine among the nations.

Machine Translated by Google

IV Are your disciples, then, men as distinguished by the nobility of their birth as by the superiority of their talents?

My disciples are twelve fishermen who only know their boats and their nets, twelve Jews, and you know what the Jews are in the esteem of other peoples.

So you count on the protection of some powerful monarch?

I will have no more mortal enemies than the kings and great men of the world: all will arm themselves to annihilate My doctrine.

So you have immense wealth, and by making gold shine in the eyes of the people, it is easy to create worshippers?

I have nothing to rest My head on.

Poor by birth, My disciples will be even more so by My orders. Like Me, they will live on alms and the work of their hands.

V Is it therefore on Your doctrine itself that You base the hope of Your success?

My doctrine is based on mysteries that men will take for madness. I want, for example, My disciples to announce that it is I who created heaven and earth, that I am God and man altogether; that I died on a cross between two thieves, because it is by this kind of torture that I must end My life. They will add that three days later I was resurrected and they saw Me ascend to heaven.

WE If Your doctrine is incredible, at least Your morality is very convenient; no doubt that it flatters all passions?

My morality combats all passions, condemns all vices, commands all virtues, and punishes with eternal torture the very thought of evil.

So you promise magnificent rewards to those who want to embrace it?

On earth, I promise them contempt, hatred of the human race, prisons, stakes, death in all forms; after life, I make them hope for rewards that the mind of man cannot comprehend.

VII In what places and to what men do You claim to teach such a philosophy? No doubt in some dark corners of Your little country, and to some ignorant people, like those You call Your disciples?

My doctrine will be preached in Jerusalem before the Synagogue; in Athens, in front of the Areopagus; in Rome, in the palace of the Caesars; everywhere, before kings and peoples, in cities and in the countryside, to the ends of the earth.

And you flatter yourself that you succeed. !

VIII Doubtless; soon I will be recognized everywhere as the only God of heaven and earth. The world will change its face; the idols will fall. From all sides, the peoples will come to embrace My doctrine. The very kings will prostrate themselves before the instrument of My torture, and will place it on their crown as its most beautiful ornament. I will have temples and altars everywhere, priests and worshippers. One day, perhaps, you yourself will shed your blood to attest to the divinity of My person and the truth of My doctrine.

Poor idiot ! Your place is not here. She's in a lunatic asylum. Go back at least, never to leave, to your father's shop. Your project is the height of extravagance.

IX The philosopher is right. In the eyes of common sense, to undertake the conversion of the world, with twelve fishermen, in the century of Augustus, in spite of all human forces, this project is the height of madness. However, history, secular history is there to attest to it: this project was carried out; it was in the manner and by the means that Jesus foretold, it was quickly.

On this ever-subsisting fact lays the Christian's CREDO.

X When Proudhon, Renan, Strauss, Kardec, with all the Smala of deniers, philosophers or spiritualists, ancient and modern, have annihilated this fact, they can flatter themselves that they have shaken the basis of our faith. Until then, we will laugh at their pygmy attacks, and send them back, as rightfully theirs, the qualifications of ignorance, credulity and imbecility with which they bestow upon us.

XI If the very philosopher of whom we have just spoken reappeared today on earth, and if he saw, like us, the religion of Jesus of Nazareth still dominating the civilized world, would he doubt the miracle of its establishment? Would he not exclaim in rapture with admiration: All that is beyond human powers, all that is therefore the work of God: incredibile, ergo divinum.

Machine Translated by Google

However, before accepting the philosopher's explanation, let's see if it is not possible to find another one.
In order to help us in this work, let us begin by summarizing the preceding facts.

Chapter XXII
Summary and development

We have just related the fact of the establishment of Christianity, as we would have related any other fact, without expressing any opinion as to the cause, human or divine, of this most astonishing revolution that ever was. Either as an integral part or as immediate consequences, this revolution involves the following facts which no one can deny, without closing their eyes to the light, or without shaking all historical certainty.

II FIRST FACT : Eighteen hundred years ago the civilized world was pagan.
SECOND FACT : Today the civilized world is Christian.
THIRD FACT : The passage from Paganism to Christianity is the work of a character named Jesus of Nazareth, helped by twelve fishermen.
FOURTH FACT : Jesus of Nazareth is a crucified Jew.
FIFTH FACT : A Jew and a crucified Jew is the most despicable thing under heaven.
SIXTH FACT : For eighteen hundred years the civilized world has worshiped this crucified Jew. He did it and still does it freely, without being compelled to do so by force or attracted by the lure of pleasure or wealth.

III SEVENTH FACT : In order to have the happiness of adoring this crucified Jew, eleven million martyrs of all conditions and from all countries have, for three hundred years, cheerfully accepted death in the midst of the most terrible torments.
Since that time thousands of others have followed their example. They still follow him today, when the opportunity arises.

Always in order to have the same happiness, men and women, of all ages, of all fortunes, of all countries, innumerable numbers, ceaselessly combat their dearest inclinations, give themselves up to harsh austerities, abandon their families, give their goods to the poor and freely consecrate their person to the service of the most disgusting miseries.

IV EIGHTH FACT : By adoring the crucified Jew, the world rose in light, in virtues, in freedoms, in civilization, in astonishing proportions.
Witness the smallest Christian child who knows more, about what it matters only to the human race to know, God, Providence, man, his nature, his duties, his end, than the greatest philosophers of the world. ancient world: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca.
Witness the most obscure Christian village, where there is more dignity for the man, more liberty for the woman, more security for the child, than was known in all the pagan world.
Witness all the peoples of Europe and America, who, formerly barbarians or savages, have become, by adoring the crucified Jew, the princes of civilization.
Witness, in a word, the world map, which shows you the light, civilization, freedom in all the countries which adore the crucified Jew.

V NINTH FACT : All the nations which do not adore the crucified Jew remain buried in the darkness of barbarism, chained in the bonds of slavery, stationary in the ways of civilization.
Witness the Chinese, the Indians, the Turks, the Arabs, the Negroes, the Oceanians; in a word, witness the world map.

WE TENTH FACT : No nation has come out and comes out of ignorant or literate barbarism, breaks the chains of slavery, walks in the way of progress, only by adoring the crucified Jew, and in the proportion of the fervor with which she adores Him. Witness all nations ancient and modern, witness universal history.

VII ELEVENTH FACT : Any nation which ceases to adore the crucified Jew, begins by losing its morals, its peace, its prosperity, and ends by disappearing or by falling back into the darkness of learned or literate barbarism, into the chains of slavery and by backsliding in the ways of civilization; and this in direct reason of his abandonment of the crucified Jew.

Witness all the nations of Asia and Africa, where ignorance vies with degradation.
Witness the nations of modern Europe, where everything becomes trouble, malaise, hatred, confusion of systems and ideas, revolutions and upheavals.

Machine Translated by Google

VIII TWELFTH FACT : The crucified Jew has been maintained, for eighteen centuries, on the altars of the civilized world, despite the formidable and constantly renewed attacks of tyrants armed with the axe, impious armed with sophism, mockers armed with sarcasm, evil men armed with all the brutal instincts of corrupt nature.

By a unique exception in the annals of the world, He maintains himself there in the midst of the continual agitations and upheavals which twenty times have changed the face of the world, carried away the empires, the republics, the most beautiful systems, the firmest institutions. : in a word, He remains there loved and adored, despite the inflexible law of death which weighs on all human works and leaves them only a passing existence.

Such are the visible, palpable, permanent facts which result from this other fact:

THE WORLD WORSHIPS A CRUCIFIED JEW

Chapter XXIII
Double explication

How to explain these incredible facts?
The thing is easy, replies the Christian.
The eighteen-century adoration of a Jew, and of a crucified Jew, by all the civilized nations of the globe, is a mystery whose depth makes anyone who wants to measure it turn the head: it is true.
The other mysteries of Christianity are no less impenetrable to reason: this is still true.
The laws of Christian morality evidently surpass the natural forces of man: that is always true, perfectly true.

II However, I understand very well both the adoration of a crucified Jew, and the belief in the impenetrable mysteries of Christianity, and the practice of its impracticable morality, by the greatest geniuses and by the greatest peoples of the world.
Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God, God Himself: this is the secret.

III Almighty, He triumphed with the weakest means over the greatest obstacles. Source of lights and virtues, He poured out on the world a part of these divine gifts, and the world believed and practiced. By believing and practicing, he rose to a high perfection, religious, political and social.

IV As long as he does not approach this God, focus of all light, principle of all perfection, he remains in degradation and in darkness. When he leaves it, he falls back into his first state of abjection and misery: as infallibly as the earth in the shadows of night, when the sun leaves the horizon.
In a word: God got involved. There was a miracle: everything can be explained.

V Miracles are old wives' tales, answer the incredulous. They only ever existed in the imagination of the cheats and in the belief of the foolish.
This is understood: the world was converted without miracles. Therefore, Jesus of Nazareth is not God and the Son of God. He is simply a Jew like another Jew, a man like another man, a philosopher like another philosopher, with some additional talent or skill. The twelve apostles were twelve fishermen, like the other fishermen. God was neither with Him nor with them.

WE So this is how you solve the problem: "Given a crucified Jew, with twelve sinners sent by Him to preach His doctrine, evidently the world had to convert and worship, as the one God of heaven and earth , this crucified Jew. There is an obvious proportion between effect and cause, between means and end. Nothing supernatural or divine there. Everything is very simple, very natural, very consistent with the laws of logic. »

We accept the solution, the consequences of which will bring to light the admirable correctness.

Chapter XXIV
The results

FIRST CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical, that a crucified Jew, assisted by twelve fishermen, without letters, without money, without protection, without credit, should have, in the middle of the century of Augustus, persuaded the whole world to break its idols, to burn his temples, to change his laws, to purify his morals, and to have himself adored as the Creator of the world and the only God of heaven and earth, He, a Jew crucified between two scoundrels, as the most scoundrel three.

Machine Translated by Google

It's all very natural, very logical, very easy to understand.

II SECOND CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical that, for three hundred years, millions of men, women, rich, poor, senators, princes, army generals, consuls, in Asia , in Africa, in Greece, in Rome, in the Gauls, in the Spains, in Germany, on the whole face of the globe, let themselves be torn, crushed, burned, drowned, chopped into pieces, to have the pleasure and the honor to adore, as the only God of heaven and earth, a crucified Jew, who is only a Jew.
It's all very natural, very logical, very easy to understand.

III THIRD CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical, that for eighteen hundred years, despite the progress of age and the development of enlightenment, the world has not emerged from its shameful idolatry; that, on the contrary, hundreds of millions of men and women of all countries love and adore the crucified Jew, who is only a Jew, to the point of letting their throats be cut for Him, or being sacrificed to Him by a voluntary devotion their fortune, their liberty, their families, their hopes, their dearest affections.
It's all very natural, very logical, very easy to understand.

IV FOURTH CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical, that the world has become much more enlightened, much more virtuous, much freer, much more civilized, much happier in every respect, by professing absurdity raised to its highest power, that is, by adoring as the Creator and the God of heaven and earth, a crucified Jew, who is only a Jew.
It's all very natural, very logical, very easy to understand.

V FIFTH CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical, that all the portion of the human race which refuses to worship, as the only God of heaven and earth, a crucified Jew, who is only a Jew, remains plunged into barbarism, into slavery, into corruption, into a frightful abyss of misery.
It's all very natural, very logical, very easy to understand.

WE SIXTH CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical, that this degraded portion of the human race should come out of barbarism, slavery, corruption, and walk in the ways of freedom, civilization and happiness, as soon as she adores, as the one God of heaven and earth, a crucified Jew, who is only a Jew.

It's all very natural, very logical, very easy to understand.

VII SEVENTH CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical, that all nations who cease to worship with faith and fervor, as the one God of heaven and earth, a crucified Jew, who is only a Jew, begin by losing their enlightenment, their morality, their peace, to end by falling, from revolution to revolution, into the anguish of pagan doubt, into the honors of pagan materialism, into the claws of pagan despotism, from which the adoration of the crucified Jew.
It's all very natural, very logical, very easy to understand.

VIII EIGHTH CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical, that a crucified Jew, who is only a Jew, having leapt with a single leap from the gibbet where He had just expired, onto the altars of the world whole, has remained motionless there for eighteen hundred years, despite all the efforts of cunning, the violence of force, the unleashing of passions, united to overthrow Him: and that in the midst of the twenty times accumulated ruins of everything the rest, empires, monarchies, republics, systems, institutions.
It's all very natural, very logical, very easy to understand.

IX NINTH CONSEQUENCE. It is very simple, very natural, very logical, that all the peoples of the world, who for four thousand years waited from heaven for a Liberator, responsible for restoring on earth the reign of truth, justice and virtue , have recognized as the object of their hopes a crucified Jew, who is only a Jew; that from that
moment they ceased to wait for another liberator; that God, who is nothing
if not goodness, truth, infinite power, has allowed, without complaint, without opposition, that this crucified Jew has seized for His profit the faith and the adoration of the human race; that this Jew, who is only a Jew,
did all the works of God, enlightened, consoled, freed, made men better and happier: and all this although He was not God, nor the sent from God; but an egregious forger, a scoundrel a thousand times worthy of the gallows on which He was hanged.

All this, you say, is very natural, very logical, very easy to understand. In all this there is nothing supernatural, nothing divine and not a shadow of a miracle.
To share your opinion, the Christian has only one thing to ask you.

Machine Translated by Google

Chapter XXV
An experiment

I In order to prove to us, as clear as two and two make four, that the conversion of the world, with all its consequences, by a crucified Jew, who is only a Jew, helped by twelve sinners, like all other sinners, is a very easy, very logical thing, which in no way surpasses human strength and which requires no miracle, we are going to ask some renowned incredulous, M. Renan, for example, to give us a repetition.

Never was an undertaking more worthy of his great heart. His deep compassion for the human race, foolishly bent for so many centuries under the degrading yoke of Christian idolatry, leaves no doubt that he lends himself happily to the proposed experience.

II So, one morning, the proud denier of the divinity of Christianity, descended into the street, his two famous volumes under his arm, and headed for the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. At his sight, the son of a carpenter offers himself, smoking his pipe in front of his father's workshop.

He calls him and says: “I am M. Renan, member of the Institute. Science has shown me that the establishment of Christianity is a purely human work. Jesus is not God, He did not work miracles. His apostles were dreamers. Stricken with hallucination, which often happens in Judea, they thought they saw what they did not see, heard what they did not hear. My books, here, will give you the proof.

With the exception of me and my ilk, humanity has for eighteen centuries been the victim of a shameful mystification.
To convince him of this, I resolved to give a repetition of the fact, of which Jesus was the hero.

III “I have chosen you to carry out this enterprise: success will be your glory as well as mine. Filled with this thought, you are going to begin again the role of Jesus of Nazareth. This role is known to you; and you are in all the conditions required to fulfill it. On the one hand, you are a carpenter and the son of a carpenter; on the other hand, you need neither supernatural agents nor miracles to succeed. So get to work, and you become immortal. »

IV On the word of the learned academician, the young carpenter leaves his father's shop, goes down to the banks of the Seine, and gathers around him twelve professional fishermen. “My friends, he said to them, leave your boats and your nets there. Follow me ; I have an important communication to make to you. »
They follow him.

V With them he goes up to the Buttes-Chaumont, and retiring aside, he makes them sit down on the grass; then he speaks to them in these terms: “You know me; you know that I am a carpenter by trade and the son of a carpenter. I have been working in my father's shop for almost thirty years. You have often seen me when you came to fetch us to repair your boats.

WE " Well ! you are wrong. I am not at all what you think. As you see me, I am God. It is I who created the sky and the earth. I have resolved to make myself recognized for what I am and to be adored throughout the universe, until the end of the centuries. I want to associate you with my glory.

VII “Here is my plan: I begin by running for a while, preaching and begging, through the countryside around Paris. Some listen to me, others laugh at me and push me away. I am accused of various crimes, and I maneuver so well that I have myself condemned to death and led to the scaffold. This is my triumph.

VIII “Three days after the execution, I put my head back on my shoulders; I rise again, and say to you: Go, teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the carpenter of Paris and enjoining them to believe all that I have taught you, to do all that I command.

IX “Paris will be the first theater of your preaching. You walk the streets; you stop in the squares; you call passers-by and tell them, “Listen to the great news. The young carpenter of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, who traveled the countryside begging and preaching; who was condemned to death by the Assize Court, and who was executed these last days, he is not a man, he is the Son of God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

X “In order to have the glory and the pleasure of worshiping him, you must all, without exception, men, women, children, rich, poor, begin by confessing that you and your fathers, as well as all the peoples of the world, you have been so far only a herd of ignoramuses, victims of the grossest errors.

Machine Translated by Google

"Then you must bow down humbly at our feet, repentance in heart; tell us all your sins, even the most secret ones, and do all the penances we think fit to impose on you.

XI "Then, you will have the kindness to allow yourself to be mocked, insulted, insulted without saying a word; put in prison, without offering the slightest resistance; whip until blood, thanksgiving on the lips; finally, beheading in the public square, and believing from the bottom of your heart that this is the happiest thing that can happen to you.
"Here, my friends, is what you will repeat word for word in all the districts of Paris. From there, you will spread in the provinces; you will cross the Alps, the Pyrenees, the ocean, and you will preach the same doctrine to the ends of the earth.

XII "I must not hide it from you. Everyone will laugh at you. Grown-ups will say you've been drinking. Troops of children will run after you, shouting and throwing stones at you. All this will cause trouble in the city. The police officers will arrest you, you will be brought to justice. The Imperial Prosecutor will reprimand you severely and forbid you to preach my doctrine.
"You will not listen to it, and you will preach it all the more. You will be arrested again: you will let yourself be arrested. You will be whipped again: you will allow yourselves to be whipped. You will be put in prison again: you will allow yourself to be put in prison. Finally, to silence you, in Paris or elsewhere, you will be cut off: you will let your head be cut off. So everything will be fine.

XIII "When this is done, we will have completely succeeded: everyone will want to convert. I will be recognized as the one true God. They will adore me first in Paris, then in the whole department of the Seine and in all the others. From Paris my worship will pass to Rome, to London, to Petersburg, to Madrid, to Constantinople, to Peking. Soon my father's shop will become a pretty chapel, where pilgrims will arrive in droves from the four corners of the world, and their rich presents will be the pride of my native town.

XIV "For you, my twelve apostles, you will be twelve saints, who will be invoked throughout the universe. Your bones will be placed on altars of gold and marble; your statues in niches, and your portraits, painted on banners, will be carried in procession, not only in Paris, but throughout the whole world, until the end of the centuries. Thus, you will arrive in a straight line to immortality, without counting the heaven that I promise you for all eternity. What happiness for you! what glory for your wives and children!
"Converting the world is no more difficult than that, and that is my project. It is, as you can see, very simple, very logical, it in no way exceeds human strength and does not require the shadow of a miracle.
"I can count on you, can't I"?

XV How would such a speech be received? there is no need to say it. I hear our brave fishermen, irritated by the mystification of which they are the object, energetically reproach it with word and gesture, perhaps with the arm, to the person who is its author. I see them descending on Paris, publishing everywhere that the head of the young carpenter from the Faubourg Saint-Antoine has moved.
And no one would be surprised to learn that the new god was taken, the same day, to the hospice of Charenton, where he enjoys, instead of divine honors, the undisputed privilege of holding the second rank among the madmen, the first belonging, without question, to the inventor of the project.

Chapter XXI
A conclusion

I It is duly established that the enterprise of the carpenter of Paris is the sublime of folly. However, it is no more senseless than that of Jesus of Nazareth, if Jesus of Nazareth is only a simple mortal, born in a stable and fed in the shop of an artisan, acting alone and without the help of more brilliant miracles.

II It is even much less so. A carpenter from Paris is worth a carpenter from Nazareth. A guillotined Frenchman is not below a crucified Jew. Twelve fishermen from the Seine can well, for knowledge and courage, compete with twelve fishermen from the little lakes of Galilee. To make a French citizen of the nineteenth century worship is, without comparison, less difficult than to make a Jew worship in the age of Augustus.

III Thus, when one wishes to explain the establishment of Christianity by purely human causes, one arrives in four steps at the last degree of ridicule. However, there is no effect without a cause. Whatever the unbeliever does, Christianity is a fact, and that unwelcome fact stands tall before him. Since he

Machine Translated by Google

there is no human cause which can explain its establishment, it is therefore necessary, unless we admit an effect without a cause, to recognize in it a divine cause. **So God got involved: there was a miracle.**

IV But **if God has interfered, Christianity is true, only true, completely true.**

To all the dogmas it teaches, to all the duties it imposes, all that remains is to say: CREDO.
Christianity says to me: man has fallen: CREDO.
The man was redeemed: CREDO.
He was redeemed by Jesus Christ, son of God made man: CREDO.
Man has an immortal soul: CREDO.
There is an eternal hell: CREDO.
There is an eternal sky: CREDO.
There is an infallible church charged with teaching the truth: CREDO.
This church will remain until the end of the world: CREDO.
This church is the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church: CREDO.

V Christianity tells me that the only way to avoid hell and deserve heaven is to do what He tells me ne: CREDO To
love God more than anything and my neighbor as myself: CREDO.
Forgive insults: CREDO.
Respect the property of others: CREDO.
Live chaste: CREDO.
Humble : CREDO.
Mortifié : I BELIEVE.
Confess myself: CREDO.
Communier: CREDO.

WE Since Christianity is true, completely true, all systems contrary to Christianity are false; all objections void, since there can be no contradictory truths.
So before the sole fact of the establishment of Christianity, all the systems: Rationalism, Pantheism, Materialism, Atheism, Naturalism, Caesarism, Sensualism, Positivism, Socialism, Solidarism, Spiritism, which today raise their ugly heads against Christianity, like the hydra of the Fable or the beast of the Apocalypse, are false, completely false.

So all the sophisms, all the ifs, all the buts, all the whys against the dogma, morals and worship of Christianity fall flat, like the bullet of the fugitive Arab against the desert pyramid.

VII Our goal has been achieved. The nineteenth-century Christian knows the refuge, the fortified castle, the impregnable citadel, from which he can brave the attacks of his enemies, as well as the torments and dangers of the present times.

Here could end our task. Nevertheless, we want to continue it. It seems useful to us to highlight all that there is power, not only defensive, but offensive in this marvelous word: CREDO.

Chapter XXVII
An offensive weapon

' To annihilate all objections at a stroke, such is the first, the immense advantage of the fact on which the CREDO of the Christian rests, the establishment of Christianity. Turning them into proofs and triumphant proofs is another.

From shield and refuge that it was, the CREDO becomes revolver and rifled barrel. Defensive weapon, it turns into an offensive weapon with power and precision that nothing equals. We will show it.
Long enough the impious have given themselves free rein against religion, we will be allowed to use reprisals once and turn their own weapons against them. Quite often the unbeliever has transformed the Christian into an idiot: can the unbeliever find it wrong that the Christian transforms him into an apologist?

II For free thinkers of all shades, pantheists, materialists, socialists, solidarists, rationalists, spiritualists, Christianity is not even a reasonable system. They discover there a host of things that do not support criticism, or that run counter to common sense. Their objections to dogma attack the divinity and even the existence of Our Lord Jesus Christ. For some, Jesus of Nazareth is just a man like any other. For those he is simply a myth, invented in order to personify a system, like the heroes and demigods of mythology.

Machine Translated by Google

III The twelve apostles are the twelve signs of the zodiac: or, if they existed, they were fanatics, dupes of their imagination, who affirmed to have seen what they had not seen, heard what they did not hadn't heard, touched what they hadn't touched.
Taken together, the mysteries of Christianity form a web of contradictions, impossibilities, absurdities and reveries, of which the slightest degree of science suffices to do prompt and sovereign justice.

IV As for morality, they maintain that it is a jumble of laws and practices, some of which are superannuated, useless, arbitrary, superstitious; the others, impossible to observe, contrary to the most imperious inclinations of nature and to the inalienable rights of human liberty. From which they conclude that an infinitely just and infinitely wise God cannot be its author.
Thus, absurdity on the one hand, impossibility or uselessness on the other: here is the last word of the unbelievers on Christianity. It follows that by embracing it the human race was struck with hallucination.

V Based on the fact of the establishment of Christianity, CREDO turns this double attack into victorious proof. By what precedes we have seen, and well seen, that even accepting Christianity as a reasonable system, it is impossible to explain its establishment by human means. Unless we admit an effect without a cause, it is absolutely necessary to have recourse to miracles, and to the best conditioned miracles.

VI You now come to tell us, and you endeavor to persuade the whole world, that Christianity is not even a reasonable system; that its dogma is false, incredible, absurd in many points. What is that ? Otherwise immensely increase the difficulty, already so great, of getting him accepted, and demonstrate with new force the existence, the necessity, the number and the brilliance of the miracles which persuaded him to the universe.

VII The stronger your objections, the more numerous they are, the more you increase the difficulty of the enterprise. Consequently, the more the miracle seizes you by the throat and forces you to confess the reality and the power of divine intervention, which has bent under the yoke of the Christian faith the proudest intelligences, the very reason of the human race.

VIII Without suspecting it, you transform yourself into an apologist, and become for yourself a true Father of the Church. Willingly, despite, you are forced to use this language: “My objections against Christian dogma are not new. All were made, and others still, at the very birth of Christianity, by heretics, by pagan philosophers, by deniers no less skilful than myself. Not a dogma of the Christian faith that has not been attacked a hundred times by reasoning, by science, by history, by all kinds of objections, and that with a superiority that has not been surpassed. Not a mystery that has not been disguised, distorted, acted out in theaters, and left to the laughing stock of a world hearing about it for the first time.

IX “If then, despite my education in a Christian country, despite the example of so many great men and so many great peoples who have believed; of so many people, no less enlightened than myself, who continue to believe; in spite of a public possession of eighteen centuries, the dogma of Christianity seems to me so contrary to reason that I find it impossible to believe: what must it have seemed to the pagan world, if not a scandal to trip up the strongest minds; a madness to sharpen all sarcasm, to provoke all laughter, to make all heads nod.

“The more I feel the force of the objections, the more also rise, in my own eyes, this scandal and this madness, consequently better I understand the absolute impossibility where was the pagan world to believe in Christianity.

X “However, this Christian dogma, which appears to me as an incoherent system and which does not stand up to my criticism; like a ridiculous mixture of fables and contradictions; like a mountain of absurdities and impossibilities, the universe believed him. He believed him, on the word of twelve ignoramuses.
“He believed it, in the middle of the century of Augustus, that is to say, as I learned in college, in the century par excellence of enlightenment, philosophy, eloquence and the arts.
"He believed it, despite the opposition a hundred times renewed by contemporary free thinkers, whose books and pens never ceased to tell him absolutely everything that I tell myself. The dogma of Christianity is a tissue of imaginary conceptions, a clumsy plagiarism of old Eastern traditions and of a few philosophical formulas.

Machine Translated by Google

XI "He believed it, in spite of the masters of the earth armed to proscribe it; in spite of Nero, Domitian, Diocletian, Galley ; in spite of the lions, the tigers, the stakes, the iron combs, employed to prevent him from believing in it.
"He believed it, on all points of the globe, in Athens, in Rome, in the East and in the West.
"And in spite of me and my ilk, he still believes it.

XII "What means of explaining this pitiless fact?
"Only two: DELIRATION OR MIRACLE.
"The miracle, I do not admit; if I admitted it, I would be a Catholic.
" The delirium ; but who is affected? Am I sure it's not me?
"Am I quite sure of being the only right against everyone and of being the only wise, only enlightened among the deadly?

XIII Can I take reasonable confidence in objections which have nothing solid in the eyes of the rest of the men, and which perhaps would seem to me illusory to myself, if my heart did not lead my reason astray?
"I think I am wise; and, through the organ of its great men and its great peoples, the whole world says that I am only a dupe, martyr of a vain error?
"Wouldn't the world say true?
"Becoming an apologist in spite of myself, such is the result to which my objections against the dogmas of the Christianity. I have maneuvered so well that all of them have become crushing proofs; so that I I find myself locked in a circle of iron, from which I can only leave by two exits:

DELIRATION OR MIRACLE ; CRAZY OR CATHOLIC.
"No middle".

CHAPTER XXVIII

Continuation of the previous

No less than the objections to the dogma of Christianity, the attacks on its morality are unexpected effect of strengthening the CREDO of the Christian. All the complaints of pride, all the whispers of passions, all the revolts of nature against the precepts of the Gospel, tend to show that these precepts are useless, impracticable, antiquated, contrary to the freedom of man, at least as one can take it or leave it, without consequence.

II What results from this?
Still the palpable proof of the existence, the necessity, the number and the brilliance of the miracles which forced the world to bow its head under the yoke of Christian morality. The stronger the objections seem, the more they are numerous, the more they increase the difficulty of the enterprise; therefore, the more they shine forth the victorious force of miracles which have triumphed over the resistances of the universe.

III Here the free thinker, Renan, Proudhon, Strauss, whatever his science, his age or his name, is again transformed, in the height of his conscience, into an involuntary apologist.
He is condemned to say to himself: "The morality of Christianity was, eighteen centuries ago, what it is today. Now, this morality seems to me in many points useless, optional, outdated, impracticable, contrary to my reason and my freedom".
It is I who hold this language! I who feel this impossibility! I who proclaim this freedom to choose the precepts that suit me and to leave those that do not suit me!

IV "Who am I, then? I, born into Christianity; I, accustomed from childhood to look at the law evangelical as a divine law and obligatory in all respects; me, fashioned on my mother's lap at the yoke it imposes; I, who grew up in a Christian atmosphere and who live surrounded by examples, whose incessant voice preaches to me both the absolute necessity of the morality of Christianity and the possibility of practice it!

V "If, despite all that, it seems to me impossible, useless, optional; with all the more reason how much did it have to to appear to the pagan world, buried in the pleasures of the senses, when it was announced to him for the first times. How then so many young people, of flesh and bones like me, so weak, so rich, so educated, as passionate as me, maybe more; how so many men of all ages, ranks, any country, of any condition, as skilful, as learned as me, perhaps more, they were able to accept as true, as obligatory, as possible this same morality which I declare false, optional, impossible?

Machine Translated by Google

VI "How did they submit to it with so much docility? How did they observe it from all points and with sustained perfection, whereas to practice it it was not only necessary to chain passions nourished from the cradle by contrary habits, strengthened by universal example, consecrated by religion; overturn from top to bottom his ideas, his tastes, his whole life; break, therefore, chains beside which mine are but garlands of flowers: but still to consent to be denied by his relatives, stripped of his possessions, riddled with sarcasm, whipped until he bled, branded with a hot iron, sent to the galleys, while waiting, as a last encouragement, the delicious pleasure of being roasted alive, or gracefully crushed between the teeth of an African lion or a Germanic bear, with clapping hands of a whole people?

VII "What means of explaining this new fact, no less pitiless than the first?
"Two only: DELIRY or MIRACLE. FAITH or MADNESS. No middle ground.

VIII "This is the result of the objections of my mind and the revolts of my heart against the morality of Christianity. Step by step I have come to demonstrate, better than any apologist, the imperious necessity and the unshakable certainty of miracles, the brilliance of which alone has been able to overcome, in the human race, all whole, the most formidable opposition that can be conceived: the pride of the senses, the weakness of the heart and the violence of passions, leagued against evangelical morality

IX "This demonstration has moreover the perfidious property of increasing in direct proportion to my difficulties. are my passions, the more indomitable are my senses, the more inveterate are my habits, the heavier are my chains, and the more I understand the necessity and the irresistible force of the miracles which triumphed over all these things, in the world of the age of Augustus, and made him, at the cost of his blood, accept and to practice a morality, the impossibility of which no one knows better than I do.

X "What do I have left?
"To claim that mankind's belief in Christianity is the effect of a hallucination?
But people will not fail to answer me: if the human race is hallucinated, who told you that you aren't you?
If all men are mad, prove that you are wise.

XI "What is left for me? Unless I close my eyes so as not to see and condemn myself to a perpetual inconsistency, which would be the gnawing worm of my conscience, the shame of my life and the torment of my death, it remains for me to return to the faith of my baptism, and to profess, even more by my conduct than by my words, the unassailable CREDO of the Catholic world".
This party alone is reasonable: CREDO.

Chapter XXIX
General summary

Frightened by the immense dangers which today threaten the faith of a large number of souls, we have wanted to provide them with an assured REFUGE . This refuge is in this word CREDO.
Founded on a most striking miracle of all and still subsisting, this word, properly understood, is for the chrétien un infallible moyen de défense et un principe éternel de victoire: This is the victory that conquers the world, our faith.
What is this miracle? It is the conversion of the world, summed up in this fact:

THE WORLD WORSHIPS A CRUCIFIED JEW.

II This fact gives rise to the following reasoning: either this crucified Jew is God, or he is not God.
If he is God, everything is explained. The world worships the crucified Jew, Jesus of Nazareth, because miracles with irresistible brilliance, wrought by Him and His disciples, proved His divinity and forced the faith of the kind human. In this case, Christianity, being the work of God, is true, completely true, eternally TRUE ; and nothing is better founded than the CREED of the Christian.
If the crucified Jew, Jesus of Nazareth, who for eighteen hundred years has been enthroned on the altars of mankind, is not God, the whole world, the civilized world, is struck by an immense, an incurable hallucination: whereas on the simple word of twelve ignoramuses, twelve forgers, twelve fanatics who are came to tell him that they had seen what they had not seen, heard what they had not heard, he, unlike

Machine Translated by Google

in all the light of his reason and despite all the inclinations of his heart, adored, and whom he adores, as the Creator of heaven and earth, a crucified Jew who called himself God and who is not.

III The first conclusion of this reasoning is that the CREDO of the Christian, based on the fact of the establishment of Christianity, with miracles or without miracles, remains an impregnable refuge. The second, that he encloses the unbeliever in a circle of iron from which he can only escape by one of these two issues: FAITH, at its highest power; or MADNESS, at its ultimate limits.

IV **Now come the Powers of darkness with their evil hours; bad times, divinely announced, with their perils of all kinds: the weakening of faith, the decadence of morals, the progression of crimes, the enormity of scandals; the Heretics, with their activity feverish with lying propaganda, their corrupting gold and their denigration of Catholicism; THE Rationalists, with their daily renewed blasphemies and sophisms; the Solidarity, with their hatred of truth, pushed to fury; Deniers of every nuance and every height, with their haughty disdain and satanic sneers; the Revolutionaries, with their anarchic projects, skilfully elaborated in the dark dens of secret societies; the Spiritists, with their oracles, their prestige and their highly avowed claim to substitute the worship of demons to the worship of the true God.**

V **That Governments, stricken with madness, league themselves against Christianity and against the Church; that they substitute the right of force for the force of right, and bring men back to the morality of wolves; that Nations, attacked by militarium tremens, organize themselves into armed camps; and that in prediction of human hecatombs, unknown in history, all their concern is to find a weapon capable of killing a hundred men in a minute; that the baptized World, this world which must entirely to Christianity, puts itself in permanent insurrection against Our Lord Jesus Christ; let him turn the arms of his soldiers and the ruses of his diplomacy against his Vicar; that he stripping of his property; that he denies his rights and showers him with outrages; than the temporal papacy collapses and with it the keystone of the social edifice; that Pius IX, driven from his home by his own children, or forced into exile; that seeds of schism demonstrate and give rise to lamentable defections; that finally, under one name or another, Solidarism, Masonism, Satanism, Socialism, the triumphant Revolution unleashes all evil passions, shakes thrones, dislocates empires, drowns civilization in blood modern and attracts to the guilty earth justly deserved catastrophes: the Christian will not be broken point.**

WE **Strong in his CREDO, he, child, young girl, poor servant, little worker, obscure plowman, he let pass, calm and confident, the justice of God. He knows and he will always know, that all these storms were predicted; that not a hair will fall from his head, without the permission of his heavenly Father; that whatever happens turns out for the good of the elect; that the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church, and that her enemies will soon rot in the tomb they had dug for her.**

Will **THE WORLD WORSHIPS A CRUCIFIED JEW.**

Sheltered by this fact, the indestructible basis of his CREDO, the Christian, whoever he is, will stand shut up the enemies of his God and his faith. Instead of being disturbed by their sophisms; instead of strive to repel them by reasoning, he will transform them into victorious proofs and do what what the children of the century do when they are at the show: he will content himself with watching, listening and to applaud.

VIII **When they have argued well, denied well, reasoned well and even more unreasonably, he will say to them: "Courage; by believing you are doing your work, you are doing mine. "Multiply your objections, your denials, your sarcasms. Undermine all the foundations of Christianity; deny the prophecies; deny miracles; deny Jesus Christ; transform my religion in a tissue of daydreams, uselessness, impossibilities; the more its dogmas will seem absurd and its impractical morality; the more the apostles will be hallucinated, weak, contemptible; more sophistry and the impious will have had or will have wit, knowledge, eloquence, credit: THE MORE MY FAITH BECOMES LONG LIVE AND YOUR PALPABLE MADNESS.**

Machine Translated by Google

"Better than anyone you have demonstrated that the worship of a crucified Jew, by all nations civilizations of the globe, is an INEXPLAINABLE FACT, obviously beyond human forces: for therefore, OBVIOUSLY DIVINE, Incredible ergo dïvinum1 ".

CONTENTS

FOREWORD		1
CHAP. I. - Il. -	Reason for this writing	2
III.	The big fact	4
- IV.	History of this fact	5
- V. -	First Difficulty: Destroy Judaism	5
VI. -	Second Difficulty: Destroy Paganism	6
VII. -	Third Difficulty: Establishing Christianity	7
VIII. -	Fourth difficulty: The scope of the company	8
IX. - X.	Fifth difficulty: Time	9
- XI.	Sixth Difficulty: The Slanderers	9
- XII.	Seventh Difficulty: The Heretics	10
- XIII.	Eighth Difficulty: The Philosophers	10
- XIV.	Ninth difficulty: The Mockers	10
- XV. -	Difficulty Ten: The Progress of Christianity	11
XVI. -	Eleventh Difficulty: The Persecutions	11
XVII. -	Weakness of means	12
XVIII. -	magnitude of success	13
19 - XX.	Quick success	14
- XXI -	serious success	14
XXII. -	real success	15
XXIII -	Lasting success	16
24 -	A guess	16
XXV. -	Summary and development	18
26 -	Double explication	19
XXVII -	The results	20
28 - 29 -	An experiment	21
	A conclusion	22
	An offensive weapon	23
	Continuation of the previous	25
	General summary	26

IMPRIMATUR
Given at Versailles on December 17, 1866
D. Bouix, Vic.-Gen. Versal.

[1] Not having wanted to make a work of erudition of this opuscule intended for all classes of readers, we have omitted quotes. If one wishes to know the evidence on which the history of the establishment of the Christianity, it will suffice to consult Bullet, History of the Establishment of Christianity; of Colonia, The Truth of Christianisme, prouvée par les auteurs païens; Mamachi, Origins and Antiquities of Christianity; Baronius, Annales ecclesiastics, or 34-130; In silence, Hist. book 15 Pliny, to Trajan; Suetonius, on Wasps. and Domitian. ; Saint Justin Tertullian, Arnobius, Minutius Felix; Celsus, Porphyry, Lucian; **and the Catechism of Perseverance, of which this occasional publication is, for the most part, a detached page.**

Machine Translated by Google

Document
produced by the Friends of Christ the King of France.

We submit all our documents
Christian copyright laws: our documents may be freely reproduced and distributed, with mention of their source.

A.C.R.F.

www.a-c-r-f.com

info@a-c-r-f.com